

2008 Delaware Developmental Disabilities Council Projects

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Federal Granting Agency: Administration on Developmental Disabilities.

1. **Partners in Policymaking Program:** This free program held one weekend a month for eight months at the Dover Sheraton trained sixteen people, who were both people with disabilities and the parents of children with disabilities, on advocacy skills. They learned not only how to advocate for themselves or their child, but how to advocate to improve the lives of all Delawareans with disabilities. Additionally, the students became thoroughly familiar with the various disabilities organizations and systems in Delaware.
2. **Accessible Medical Equipment Information Project:** This was an information project geared to educate Delaware's medical community on the need for accessible medical and dental equipment in their offices. It provided information on the poor care many people with disabilities are receiving because they don't receive proper medical examinations. It also provided information on obtaining accessible medical equipment, tax advantages, etc.
3. **Public Sector AT Training:** This project trained public sector (state, county and city) human resources personnel in Delaware on the assistive technology currently available to help people with disabilities excel in the workplace. The intent is to have more people with disabilities obtain employment in the public sector.
4. **Respite Website:** This website project enables a person in search of respite to type in parameters such as type of disability, age, in home or out of home, weekday or weekend, day or night and county. The site will then list all providers in the person's county by zip code, with contact information, that meet the parameters typed into the site.
5. **Childcare Center Staff Training:** This is a pilot project with six child care centers to train those staffs on working with children who have various types of disabilities. The goal is to make the centers more willing to accept children with disabilities. At the end of the pilot, the training curriculum will be modified using lessons learned and then the training will be offered statewide.
6. **Recreation Center Staff Training:** This is a pilot project at two recreation centers to train those staffs on how to provide recreational and exercise opportunities to people with various types of disabilities. The staff also received training on exercise equipment available on the market, plus how to adapt existing equipment to the needs of people with disabilities. At the end

of the pilot, the training curriculum will be modified using lessons learned and the training will be offered statewide.

7. **Social Skills Training Project:** This project consisted of a series of three trainings; one in each county. The training is a “train the trainer” model that involves training those who work or live with people who are on the autism spectrum. Those trained learn how to teach social skills to people with autism, especially Aspergers Syndrome to improve their chances of obtaining employment.
8. **A Better Tomorrow:** This project trains people who are intending to move out of institutions into the community on how to successfully make that transition. They are taught Life Skills they will need to survive in the community including bill paying, proper shopping techniques, proper nutrition, managing a check book, personal security and making social contacts. Additionally, they are offered counseling and mentoring as long as they request it.
9. **Disabilities Awareness Day Picnic:** This annual event normally attended by over 500 people increases the public’s awareness of both the accomplishments of people with disabilities and annually company in Delaware that has made great strides in employing people with disabilities and providing them with meaningful work opportunities. The 2008 company winner was Biler’s Country Store of Dover.
10. **LIFE Conference:** This annual event is the largest disabilities conference in Delaware with over 500 people normally attending. The four main tracks of the conference were Legislation, Independence through Assistive Technology, Family and Education with each track having three workshops. Additionally, several legislators and a volunteer were honored at lunch for the work they did during the past year to improve the lives of Delawareans with disabilities.
11. **Inclusion Conference:** This conference attracted over 400 educators, both special and general, administrators, parents and advocates. The workshops focused on how to make our schools inclusive from preschool through high school. The latest techniques for creating inclusive classrooms and an environment of inclusion in Delaware’s schools was presented.
12. **Brain Injury Conference:** This conference annually attended by around 200 people looks at the current trends in the treatment and prevention of brain injuries. In addition to current treatment trends and brain injury survivor issues, the 2008 conference also focused on programs available through the VA for veterans returning from both Iraq and Afghanistan with a brain injury.
13. **Direct Support Workers Conference:** This was the second annual conference to improve the quality and professionalism of direct support workers in

Delaware. Techniques on how to improve service to clients are demonstrated. Also, ways to retain and reward outstanding workers are presented. Career ladders and required professional training is also discussed. The goal of the conference is to improve the retention, quality and professional status of direct support workers in Delaware.

14. **Affordable Housing/Universal Design Legislation:** This draft legislation is designed to require all affordable housing in Delaware; that is, housing built with public money to be built using the basics of universal design. We are aiming to have the legislation introduced into the General Assembly 2009.
15. **Gubernatorial Forum:** This forum occurred in July and gave the gubernatorial candidates an opportunity to inform the citizens of Delaware about their positions concerning key disabilities issues. The candidates were given what the disabilities community considered their key issues prior to the forum so they could prepare their positions. The candidates also answered questions from the audience about their positions.
16. **Delaware People First:** Council provided support for this self-advocacy organization of people with cognitive disabilities which is affiliated with the Arc of Delaware. Council's support helped pay for leadership training, transportation of members to the meetings, guest speakers at meetings, the group's annual conference and educational trips.
17. **Adult Ambitious Aspergers Social Group:** In 2008, Council also provided support for this new self-advocacy organization made up of young adults with Aspergers Syndrome. With Council's support, the group was able to hold meetings, have leadership training, and participate in social activities that greatly improved the quality of their lives.
18. **Variety after School Program:** This pilot inclusive program is taking place at the Brennan School in Newark. Teachers from the school run the after school program which provides the students educational, recreational and socialization opportunities. Council intends to continue to work with Variety the Children's Charity to start these programs in schools statewide.
19. **End of Life Conference:** This conference coordinated by Delaware Hospice focused on quality of life issues for persons with cognitive disabilities and their families at the end of life. It addressed issues both the individual and the family can do to make that time as comfortable and meaningful as possible. It also addressed key financial considerations for the family when a loved one with a disability is at the end of life.
20. **Housing Information Website:** This website which is managed by the Arc of Delaware provides information on all types of housing for people with disabilities. From supervised apartments and group homes to affordable

housing programs, information is provided with eligibility criteria, websites, points of contact, phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses.

- 21. Transition Map DE:** This web based project managed by the Center for Disabilities Studies at the University of Delaware provides all types of transition information to both parents and children in Delaware. It includes important information for parents on transitioning from the child to the adult health systems. It also includes information on the transition from school to work and school to higher education programs in Delaware.